

VZCZCXRO6408
RR RUEHCHI RUEHDT RUEHHM
DE RUEHJA #2817 2770906
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 040906Z OCT 07
FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 6583
INFO RUEHZS/ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 0919
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 1323
RUEHWL/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON 1849
RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA 0128
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS
RUCPDO/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC
RUEHRC/USDA FAS WASHDC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC

UNCLAS JAKARTA 002817

SIPDIS

SIPDIS
SENSITIVE

DEPT PASS USTR FOR KATZ AND BROOKS
DEPT FOR EAP, EAP/RSP, EAP/MTS, EAP/MLS
DEPT FOR EB/IFD/OMA
DEPT ALSO FOR OES/IET AND OES/ETC/TED
TREASURY FOR IA-SETH SEARLS
COMMERCE FOR 4430/[GOLIKE]

E.O. 12598: N/A

TAGS: [ECON](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [KDEM](#) [ID](#) [BM](#)

SUBJECT: ASEAN FAVORS ENGAGEMENT WITH BURMA, MAY DELAY BURMA'S
CHARTER SIGNATURE

¶1. (SBU) Summary. ASEAN Secretariat staff express hope that momentum for stronger ASEAN condemnation of Burmese repression will continue to build, but also maintain that an increase in economic engagement is the best way to affect political change in Burma. ASEAN may delay Burma's signing of the ASEAN Charter. However, Secretariat staff do not believe this delay will impact ASEAN decision making or operations going forward. End Summary.

Secretariat Asserts Engagement with Burma

SIPDIS
Best Way Forward

¶2. (SBU) In recent discussions with Post, ASEAN Secretariat staff expressed hope that momentum for stronger ASEAN condemnation of Burmese repression would continue to build, but also maintained that an increase in economic engagement is the best way to affect political change in Burma. Secretariat officials also indicated that ASEAN is currently debating the appropriateness of Burma signing the ASEAN Charter in Singapore next month. Some member countries have argued that having Burma sign the Charter will provide ASEAN with a stronger mechanism to force change in the current Burmese regime. However, given that the Charter will not contain a significant enforcement mechanism or requirement for expulsion in the face of human rights abuses, the Secretariat believes member countries will merely delay Burma's signing of the document until an unspecified date.

¶3. (SBU) The Secretariat asserted that a delay in Burma's signing will not have a significant impact on ASEAN decision making going forward. ASEAN does not have legally binding agreements that will be impacted by Burma's exclusion from the ASEAN Charter. Secretariat officials also noted that the current Charter draft is unlikely to contain a strong dispute settlement mechanism or general compliance rules for all ASEAN agreements because of difficulty in reaching political consensus on these items. Instead, ASEAN plans to negotiate compliance and enforcement issues on an agreement-by-agreement basis. Secretariat officials also noted that ASEAN plans to introduce legally binding agreements in the economic

realm over the next few years to facilitate integration. However, they conceded that ASEAN would likely avoid pushing for binding political agreements until all member countries understand and accepted the agreement enforcement mechanism.

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